Work Engagement: A Descriptive Qualitative Study on the perception of teachers

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Abstract: Work engagement is a state of mental motivation that allows workers to achieve success in the workplace. However, due to high work demands and exhaustion, teachers might find it difficult to engage in work. Teachers can develop work engagement if they intervene in the barriers that prevent them from doing their work by providing facilitators. The aim of this study was to describe teachers' perceptions of work engagement at different stages of education. A descriptive qualitative study was designed. Four focus groups were conducted with a total of 26 Spanish teachers. Three main themes and six sub-themes emerged from the analysis of the data: (1) Causes of the generation of work engagement: personal facilitators and facilitators of the environment; (2) Barriers to generating work engagement: individual and environmental; (3) Effects of work engagement: positive consequences and negative consequences. These findings indicate that there are several facilitators and barriers that promote and/or hinder the generation of work engagement in Spanish teachers. However, it should be noted that the study presents transferable results for other countries dealing with similar issues. In conclusion, training teachers in certain skills would improve their ability to solve complex situations and increase their levels of work engagement.

Keywords: Work engagement, teacher education, focus group, qualitative research, teachers.

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Introduction

Work engagement is a construct that integrates behavioral, emotional and cognitive dimensions, corroborating the multidimensional nature of this construct (Fredericks, Blumenfeld & Paris, 2004; Lam et al., 2014). Work engagement is defined as a state of mental satisfaction, interest, positivity and motivation that allows workers to achieve success in the workplace (Bakker, 2017; Schaufeli et al., 2002). If attention is paid to the educational field, Martínez et al. (2019) suggest that work engagement is one of the pillars of education because it presents a relationship with the prevention of failure and abandonment of work, as well as increased job satisfaction and motivation (Froiland, 2021; Tarabini et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2016; Zaff et al., 2017). Therefore, the present study has taken this idea as a starting point, making work engagement the main construct of this study. It has often been connected to the expertise, professional development and interaction of teachers with students (Lauderdale, 2011; Kangas et al., 2017) and to self-efficacy, a quality that can produce greater achievement and engagement (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003). In this qualitative descriptive study, the engagement of teachers irefers to the behavioral, emotional and cognitive engagement of teachers with the teaching process and the interest of the teacher in helping their students learn.

Conceptualising the teachers' work engagement

Engagement is conceptualised in a variety of ways. Some authors define work engagement as a two-dimensional variable integrated by behavioral and emotional dimensions (Finn, 1989; Newman, Wehlage & Lamborn, 1992; Marks, 2000; Willms, 2003). However, according to later research by Fredericks et al. (2004) and Lam et al. (2014), work engagement has been defined by behavioral, emotional and cognitive dimensions. The behavioral dimension is based on the idea of active participation in activities (academic, curricular or extracurricular, family, sports, work, social, etc.), including the ability to reflect, raise doubts and be able to resolve them, in order to achieve positive results, as well as to avoid abandonment or avoidance of the task (Soria & Stebleton, 2012). The emotional dimension encompasses both positive and negative, motivation, emotional regulation, anxiety, self-esteem, etc. (Fredricks, Filsecker & Lawson2016; Sharek & Wiebe, 2014). And with respect to the last dimension, cognitive, engagement is based on the variables of constancy and effort needed to master complex skills (Ennis, Hess & Smith, 2013).

Engagement can also be considered a process consisting of three interconnected stages : motivation, interest and engagement (Renninger & Bachrach, 2015; Renninger & Hidi, 2011). Motivation allows teachers to assess task challenges against their own abilities. Interest can be triggered by a situation, challenge or person and then become a lasting interest to learn more about the phenomena (Järvelä & Renninger, 2014; Renninger & Bachrach, 2015). This interest is influenced by the environment. Teachers can therefore change any environment to make it more pleasant for students and themselves; however, the ability to change environments requires teachers to have a range of skills. Hence the

importance of teacher education to improve their work engagement (Hyvönen, 2008; Kangas et al., 2017).

Globally, it is estimated that an increasing percentage of teachers present high levels of exhaustion, irritability, lack of energy and concentration and job desertion caused by high work demands, which is a public health problem that may be indicative of the appearance of the exhaustion syndrome (Avalos & Valenzuela, 2016; Gutentag, Horenczyk & Tártaro, 2017; OECD, 2018; Torenbeek & Peters, 2017). Some authors have shown that disruptive behaviors of students and unfavorable treatment with their families are two factors that affect the engagement of teachers, since they contribute to work stress (Authors, 2019; Rodríguez-Mantilla & Fernández-Díaz, 2017; Otero-López et al., 2015). Therefore, the study of work engagement is relevant if we want to reduce the high percentage of teachers who suffer high levels of exhaustion and abandonment of work.

Despite this percentage of teachers and certain disagreements in understanding the construct of work engagement, OECD (2018) and Toll, Drefs & Lock(2016) defend that teachers can develop this mental state if they intervene in the barriers that prevent them from carrying out their work, providing facilitating elements such as motivation, satisfaction, social and family support, favourable social relations, etc. Work engagement of teachers is related to active participation in work-related activities, good results, favorable social relations, high levels of motivation, resilience, satisfaction and effort. So a teacher engaged in their work presents high levels of motivation, performance, satisfaction, interest, good results, etc. (Hardré et al., 2013; Mérida-López et al., 2022; Shoshani & Eldor, 2016; Van Wingerden & Poell, 2019; Zhang, He & Fu, 2021). On the contrary, the lack of engagement of teachers has been linked to decreased collaboration, a lack of emotional intelligence and high levels of stress, irritability and dissatisfaction, negatively affecting the teaching-learning process and exercising the professional work of teachers. It is therefore essential to develop training and intervention programmes adapted to the needs of teachers (Cejudo & López-Delgado, 2017; McCarthy et al., 2016; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2016).

The present study

Work engagement that involves the time that teachers dedicate to their work and the quality of their teaching efforts is a relevant predictor of the prevention of failure, exhaustion, stress and dropout from work (Hoigaard, Giske & Sundsli, 2012; Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). Although it is known the influence of certain variables such as motivation, satisfaction, stress, etc. on work engagement (McCarthy et al., 2016; Timms & Brough, 2013), there is little research based on focus groups on teachers' perceptions, who are one of the essential agents of education, on work engagement of the same (Zamora, Meza & Cox, 2018). Hence the relevance of this study whose objective was to understand and explore teachers' perceptions of work engagement at all stages of education through a descriptive qualitative study, in order to rigorously explore teachers' perceptions of work engagement. In this sense, this study is expected to clarify teachers' perceptions of

work engagement, in addition to contributing to the knowledge of the work engagement of teachers to promote teacher training in certain competencies that improve their ability to solve complex situations and increase their levels of work engagement (Kangas et al., 2017).

In this sense, this study shows a clarification of teachers' perceptions about work engagement. Thus, this study can contribute to the knowledge of work engagement of teachers to understand work engagement from the perspective of participants, explore teachers' perceptions of work engagement at all stages of education and examine the complexities teachers may encounter in generating work engagement, promoting teacher education in certain competencies that improve their ability to solve complex situations and increase their levels of work engagement (Kangas et al., 2017).

Method

Research Design

This research is a descriptive qualitative study that allows us to describe in depth, from a naturalistic perspective, a phenomenon little known from the exploration of the experiences and perceptions of the protagonists, in this case, teachers of all educational stages (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista,2014). This approach is appropriate because it starts with the previous narrative to understand a construction thanks to the experiences, perceived emotions and meanings of the participants. In research with qualitative descriptive scope, it is sought to carry out phenomenological or constructivist narrative studies, which seek to describe the subjective representations that emerge in a human group about a given phenomenon. Therefore, it is appropriate to explore and collect information on experiences and perceptions in educational environments from the point of view of teachers at all stages of education (Miller et al., 2018).. Consolidated criteria for qualitative research reporting in terms of research equipment and reflectability, study design, analysis and results (COREQ) were followed (Tong, Sainsbury & Craig,2007).

The Participants of the Study and Environment

The study was carried out in three educational centers in the province of Almería (Spain). The selection of the sample was made through an intentional sampling technique, meeting the following inclusion criteria: teachers of Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary Education, experience in rural or urban centres throughout Spain and having given informed consent. The only exclusion criterion was to refuse to collaborate in the study. The interest in teachers of different educational levels lies in their heterogeneity and differences in years of work experience, which may show some influence on the perceptions of the participants. For the recruitment of participants, no financial compensation was necessary, as it was not too difficult to gather enough participants. In this type of research, as far as the investigator is concerned, his position is impartial, that

is, he tries to ensure rigorous procedures and objectives of data collection and analysis, as well as to prevent their biases and trends from influencing the results. One of the researchers (X) invited thirty professionals to participate through phone calls, thus arranging appointments. However, four of them declined due to a lack of time. A total of 26 teachers from rural and urban schools in the province of Almería (Spain) participated. Of these, 77% were women and 23% were men. The average age of the participants was 45.27 (*DT* 14.09) and they had been working as teachers for an average of 18.42 years (*DT* 11.35). The sociodemographic characteristics of the participants are shown in Table 1.

Data Collection

The data were collected between January and February 2022 through four focus groups led by researchers trained in qualitative research (X, X). The focus groups took place in the educational centers where the teachers work and had a duration of 1:30 h. Before the sessions began, sociodemographic data were collected through the guidelines of focus groups, the protocol was explained, data confidentiality was guaranteed and consent was signed. The following question was then asked: "What aspects make you feel engaged in your work ?". After the introductory question, new questions arose during the session. For example: "What barriers have you encountered to engage?" "What is necessary to overcome these difficulties?" "What are the advantages/drawbacks of being engaged?" And finally, "how do you feel when you engage?"

All participants' responses were recorded in audio and transcribed word-for-word. Subsequently, participants had the opportunity to read the transcripts to verify the content. After this, the transcripts were analyzed by grouping them into categories. Data collection ceased when the point of information saturation was reached, that is, when no new categories or additional information on the subject emerged.

Table 1. *Sociodemographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 26)*

	Participant	Gender	Year	Country	Years of experience
Focus group 1. Early Childhood	1	Female	25	Spain	1
	2	Female	24	Spain	3
	3	Female	42	Spain	18
	4	Female	40	Spain	15
	5	Female	26	Spain	3
	6	Female	33	Spain	9
Focus group 2. Primary	1	Female	43	Spain	19
	2	Female	29	Spain	4
	3	Female	44	Spain	20
	4	Female	43	Spain	20
	5	Female	28	Spain	3
	1	Male	60	Spain	29

	2	Male	57	Spain	24
	3	Male	26	Spain	2
Focus group 3. Secondary	1	Female	49	Spain	25
	2	Female	59	Spain	30
	3	Female	55	Spain	27
	4	Female	55	Spain	24
	5	Female	40	Spain	13
	6	Female	30	Spain	4
Focus group 4. Mixed with more years of experience	1	Female	63	Spain	30
	2	Female	62	Spain	32
	3	Female	61	Spain	30
	1	Male	60	Spain	30
	2	Male	62	Spain	31
	3	Male	61	Spain	33

Data Analysis

The focus group responses were transcribed and analyzed with the qualitative analysis software Atlas.ti version 22 (Scientific Software Development GmbH, Berlin, Germany), by three researchers (X, X, X), along with the researchers' annotations. The analysis was carried out by means of a bottom-up strategy, which starts from the textual data and moves towards its classification into topics of analysis. The phases described by Braun & Clarke (2021) were taken into account: (1) First, transcripts were read for the familiarization of data and re-reading for the taking of ideas notes and prior knowledge of experiences; (2) Then, the main codes were generated, that is, a systematic codification of the data groups was carried out; (3) Then an inductive data analysis was performed, that is, a search by themes: the codes were associated and grouped in themes with patterns of meaning shared with the main theme; (4) The themes were then revised to ensure consistency of the codes and their subsequent outcomes on themes and sub-themes; (5) The themes were subsequently defined: the details of each theme were refined; and (6) Finally, the report was prepared: selected examples of topics and sub-themes, the analysis was related to the research objective and the final report was prepared (Table 2).

Rigour

The rigour of the present study was assured by the criteria proposed by Guba and Lincoln (1994): credibility, reliability and confirmability and transferability. First, for credibility, three qualitative methodology researchers analyzed the data independently. Subsequently, the results were triangulated between the entire research team and the participants. For reliability and confirmability, the researchers made the transcripts, which were reviewed by the participants. In addition, the use of extracts from participants corroborates the confirmability. Finally, for transferability, information on participants, context and method was detailed and saturation of data was verified along the narratives

of participants. Finally, the transcripts of the experiences were incorporated into the results through citations verified by the participants and this contributed to the rigour of the present study.

Ethical Considerations

All applications for ethical approval are made in compliance with the provisions established in the current legislation on the protection of personal data contained in Organic Law 3/2018, of December 5, on the protection of personal data and guarantee of digital rights. Before the research, the required permits were obtained from the ethics committee (UALBIO2020/046), the school administration, and the participants. Prior to data collection, participants received verbal and written information about the objective of the study. Their participation was voluntary, they could withdraw from the studio if they wished, and informed consent was obtained prior to the audio recording. During the data analysis, the anonymity of the participants and the total confidentiality of the data were guaranteed.

Findings

Inductive data analysis led to three main themes and six sub-themes (Table 2, Figure 1). All of these have enabled the objective of describing and exploring teachers' perceptions of work engagement at all stages of education to be achieved. The following results section presents the themes and sub-themes along with a selection of the most representative citations.

Figure 1. *Conceptual Map of Themes and Sub-themes*
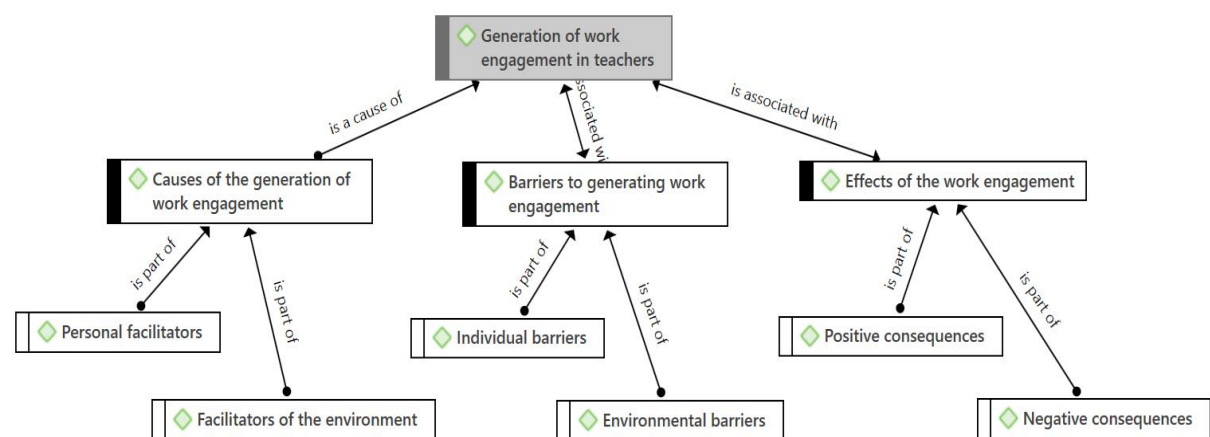
Theme 1: Causes of employment engagement

The generation of work engagement in teachers depends on the close relationship between the teachers, their families and the surrounding environment (co-workers, management team, students' families, etc.). This theme reveals the causes perceived by

teachers that promote the generation of work engagement. Two sub-themes emerged under this theme: (a) personal facilitators and (b) facilitators of the environment.

Sub-theme 1.1: Personal Facilitators

More than half of the participants ($n = 16$) stressed that setting goals and rewards when you engage, whether personal, economic or social, play an important role in engaging. The rewards refer to the incentives teachers receive during or after their professional work. This reward was associated with an economic award or a personal or social stimulus. That is, teachers engage themselves to work because they earn a salary or because they receive a stimulus that gives them benefits, such as feeling good about themselves or, simply, the obligation to cover some need:

"And also for a need. We all have a need to engage, a reward, even if it is your personal esteem" (Group 4-Woman 1).

"And set a goal. Because in our work it is very important to achieve a goal with our students. I think that also engages us a lot and leads us on the right path" (Group 1-Woman 3).

Other causes that, according to twelve teachers, promote the generation of engagement are the satisfaction and motivation felt when working and, consequently, the vocation to professional work, which generates a sense of usefulness for society and responsibility:

"The motivation, usefulness and personal reward one receives are worth it" (Group 3-Woman 6).

"But that motivation, especially when we reach a certain age, we have to look for it in our day to day" (Group 4-Woman 1).

However, according to twenty teachers, the causes that promote the generation of engagement are not always intrinsic to the person, but also depend on other external facilitators.

Sub-theme 1.2: Facilitators of the Environment

According to the point of view of twenty-one teachers, a favorable environment and good relations with the closest people (family members, co-workers, students, etc.) are key facilitators when generating work engagement. Favorable environment means an environment of tolerance and respect that helps the teacher exercise professional work in a positive way and, in turn, good social relations refers to social interactions based on work involvement, engagement with the well-being of others and fostering a sense of belonging to a group. Therefore, teachers also indicated that social and environmental influences must be taken into account when generating engagement:

"When the companions are very involved, there is a high degree of engagement of the people in the activity that is, because that causes a degree of contagion" (Group 3-Woman 4).

"If the environment is better, you engage more. If you see that in the environment you are not valued or whatever, then you dedicate yourself to something else" (Group 3-Woman 2).

On the other hand, according to fourteen participants, social recognition is essential to achieve this objective. That is, people in the environment value what you do and recognize the importance of the profession:

"I would add the value that is given to the work that you are doing by colleagues, families and the management team as well. Because when you have been for many years and families do not value the work that you are doing, in the end, you feel unmotivated" (Group 1-Woman 1).

"We are workers and we are people and if you want us to work well, that support and recognition are necessary" (Group 1-Women 2).

Theme 2: Barriers to generating work engagement

Generating engagement is not an easy task, as teachers face a number of barriers to achieving this goal on a daily basis, fighting against all the adverse factors that make it difficult for them to perform their professional work. This theme reveals the barriers perceived by teachers that hinder the generation of work engagement in them. Two sub-themes emerged under this theme: (a) individual barriers and (b) environmental barriers.

Sub-theme 2.1: Individual Barriers

Twenty-one teachers stressed that the biggest barrier they have to face is the lack of planning and organization of time, because this poor time management prevents them from engaging in the various work activities that encompass professional work, since they also have to face other responsibilities. Most teachers pointed out that due to this poor time management, family reconciliation is another barrier to be highly engaged in their work:

"For lack of time. Because of my work engagement and the schedule I have, I donot have time to dedicate myself to other social activities. And that often influences the performance of my work. Family reconciliation affects work and personal engagement" (Group 3-Women 2).

"I consider that I have a fairly high level of engagement in both the personal and the work environment, which causes the level of family engagement to decrease slightly due to a lack of time" (Group 3-Women 6).

On the other hand, thirteen teachers believe that low levels of resilience, emotional management and constancy make it difficult to engage with professional work. Because of this, several of the teachers recognized that these barriers cause demotivation and accommodation when exercising the work:

"For me, the barriers have been personal rather than social. Lack of desire, motivation or time. When I lack motivation it is difficult to maintain constancy and in the end, I end up abandoning the task or project" (Group 3-Woman 6).

"Depending on how your emotional intelligence helps you deal with failures, you may or may not be able to continue the engagement. For me it is very important because emotional intelligence is very present in any attitude you have towards life. There may be people whose emotional intelligence is not so rich and who knows, maybe they can decline that engagement" (Group 2-Woman 1).

As teachers have said, the generation of teacher engagement is also hindered by emotional needs. Hence the importance of emotional support for less engaged teachers. However, half the teachers emphasized that the barriers that hinder their work engagement cause them high levels of fatigue and stress and, due to poor emotional management, these barriers can trigger burnout syndrome:

"It is possible to operate what is called the "burnout" syndrome, the "burn out". I particularly believe that I always maintained the same attitude of engagement, although with some ups and downs in my work as a teacher" (Group 4-Man 3).

"Now that I am older, the main obstacle is the will, which sometimes fails because one is already tired" (Group 4-Woman 3).

Sub-theme 2.2: Environmental Barriers

However, according to the opinion of ten teachers, there are factors inherent in professional education that hinder the generation of engagement. A large number of teachers revealed that toxic environments, poor social relations and perceived social pressure to cope with the various responsibilities they faced affected their engagement with their work. Some teachers did not even feel supported by their family or peers, affecting their work engagement levels:

 "Not only a physically pleasant environment, but an environment in which positive energy, tolerance and respect prevail. The psychologically healthy thing is to flee from toxic environments that poison the soul" (Group 4-Woman 3).

"If the environment helps you, well. But I saw that the environment was so bad that it could not even flow" (Group 1-Woman 2).

Ten teachers mentioned the existence of engagements imposed or forced by society or families, which they called 'false engagements', which cause emotional difficulties, depend on the education received and hinder work engagement. Relevant quotes that

abala were:

"Because those people aren't happy. They're not doing what they want. They're not really engaged. It's a false engagement" (Group 1-Woman 2).

"When engagement is an obligation, it is different there. There, it is something mandatory and you feel good because it is what is expected of you, but you do not commit the same as when it is more voluntary" (Group 3-Woman 4).

On the other hand, four teachers expressed their discomfort with the lack of humanization, that is, they indicated that teachers are treated without taking into account their human condition and without empathy. Increasingly, individualism hinders the generation of work engagement. Well, individualism hinders positive social relationships and makes people not feel socially supported, with selfishness prevailing:

"Most people increasingly tend to be locked in their bubble and make a life focused solely on instant pleasure [...] Unfortunately, individualism is increasingly prevalent" (Group 4-Woman 3).

Theme 3: Effects of work engagement

The fact that teachers feel engaged in work causes a series of effects, both positive and negative, on their people and these, in turn, influence the generation of work engagement. This topic describes the personal effects that provoke work engagement in teachers. Two sub-themes emerged under this theme: (a) positive consequences and (b) negative consequences.

Sub-theme 3.1: Positive consequences

The results of this study showed that the teachers involved in the work presented a series of positive personal consequences such as satisfaction and motivation towards the work performed, general well-being and a feeling of being active, useful for society and valued by society. More than half of teachers ($n=$ 19) pointed out that these positive consequences improve levels of self-esteem, positively impacting engagement with the professional work performed:

"Engaging with something motivates me, excites me, teaches me and gives me well-being and pride towards oneself when achieving the goal" (Group 3-Woman 6).

"Engaging with something lets me know that I have been helpful to others" (Group 3-Woman 1).

Sub-theme 3.2: Negative consequences

Despite the positive consequences of being engaged in work, teachers ($n=$ 16) say that when they encounter many of the difficulties mentioned above or do not achieve the stated goal, they suffer negative emotional consequences such as anxiety, stress, frustration, fears, insecurity, nervousness, stress and tiredness. According to teachers,

these consequences negatively impact work engagement and may cause the opposite effect: burnout syndrome:

"When you engage with someone and realize that you can't engage well, it causes you stress or anxiety. When you see that you have many obstacles, they cause a stressful situation" (Group 1-Woman 6).

"Sometimes tired and a little overwhelmed, but usually happy and satisfied" (Group 4-Woman 3.

Table 2. *Coding Strategy*

Date	Initial code	Sub-theme	Main theme
"I am a happy person because I love and that generates engagement. Do what you like and if you can not do what you like, like what you do" (Group 4-Woman 2).	Feeling of belonging to a group, motivation, rewards, goal setting, vocation, usefulness, satisfaction, obligation, responsibility	Personal facilitators	
"Not just a physically pleasant environment, but an environment where positive energy, tolerance and respect prevail. The psychologically healthy thing is to flee from toxic environments that poison the soul, so to go ahead with something depends on it not harming us, either biologically or spiritually" (Group 4-Woman 3).	Enabling environment, social influence, social and family support, social recognition, positive responses	Facilitators of the environment	Causes of the generation of work engagement
"For example, for me, the barriers themselves have been personal rather than social. Lack of desire, lack of motivation or lack of time. What has almost always prevented me from engaging has been a lack of motivation. When I am lacking it is difficult to maintain consistency and in the end the task or project is abandoned" (Group 3-Woman 6).	Lack of planning and organization of time, low resilience, lack of constancy, demotivation, accommodation, emotional mismanagement, fatigue, lack of humanization	Individual barriers	Barriers to generating work engagement
"Because those people aren't happy. They're not doing what they want. They're not really engaged. It is a false engagement" (Group 1-Woman 2).	'False engagement' or imposed engagement, lack of social and family support, social pressure, toxic environments, poor social relations, too many responsibilities, education received	Environmental barriers	
"To know that we have been useful to others" (Group 3-Woman 1).	Satisfaction, well-being, motivation, feeling useful,	Positive consequences	

	valued and active, greater involvement, high self-esteem	
"When you engage with someone and see that you do not arrive, it causes stress or anxiety. When you see that you have many obstacles, they cause a stress situation" (Group 1-Woman 6).	Anxiety, stress, frustration, fear, insecurity, nervousness, fatigue	Negative consequences	Effects of the work engagement

Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations

The aim of this study was to describe and explore teachers' perceptions of work engagement at all stages of education. Previous studies show that work engagement can prevent failure and job desertion (Hoigaard et al., 2012; Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). However, the lack of knowledge regarding teachers' perceptions of work engagement makes it difficult to understand, which may be indicative of the evidence that teachers are increasingly suffering from burnout syndrome (Avalos & Valenzuela, 2016; Gutentag et al., 2017; Mérida-López et al., 2022; Authors, 2019; Rodríguez-Mantilla & Fernández-Díaz, 2017; Salmela-Aro, Hietajärvi & Lonka, 2019; Zamora et al., 2018). Describing and exploring the perceptions of teachers at all stages of education can improve knowledge about work engagement in this group, expanding needs and knowledge or teacher education in this subject, in order to move away from the levels of dropout suffered by teachers (Ávalos & Valenzuela, 2016; Mérida-López et al., 2022; Otero-López et al., 2015; Torenbeek & Peters, 2017).

According to Bakker (2017), Mérida-López et al. (2022) and Schaufeli et al. (2002), work engagement is a state of mental satisfaction, interest, positivity and motivation that allows workers to achieve success in their work. Teachers can improve their work engagement by providing facilitators to help them get on with their work (Toll et al., 2016). The results of this study show that motivation, satisfaction and favorable social relations and environment are some facilitators of the generation of work engagement (Hardré et al., 2013; Hoigaard et al., 2012; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2016; Shoshani & Eldor, 2016; Van Wingerden & Poell, 2019; Zhang et al., 2021).

However, according to the results of this study, some of the barriers that make it difficult for teachers to engage with professional work are low scores in emotional intelligence and high levels of demotivation, stress and tiredness, concurring with the studies of Avalos & Valenzuela (2016), Otero-López et al. (2015), Rodríguez-Mantilla & Fernández-Díaz (2017), Skaalvik & Skaalvik (2016). These barriers indicate the deficit of certain competences that must be present in teachers and this has been confirmed in the study. Skills such as emotional management, resilience and time management should be part of educational training programmes (Cejudo & López-Delgado, 2017; McCarthy et al., 2016), existing specific educational programmes based on mindfulness that train emotional intelligence and reduce stress (Coo & Salanova, 2017; Leroy et al.,

2013). In this way, teachers will be prepared to deal with the complex situations that arise in their work and will be more involved in the exercise of their professional work. In addition, it would be necessary to analyze whether the management team, students and families could help improve the emotional well-being that affects the personal, family and working lives of teachers.

According to other studies, the results show that professionally engaged teachers present a series of positive personal consequences such as satisfaction and motivation towards the work done (Hoigaard et al., 2012). However, when they encounter many of the difficulties mentioned above, they suffer negative emotional consequences such as stress, tiredness and anxiety (Gutentag et al., 2017; McCarthy et al., 2016; Authors, 2019; Salmela-Aro et al., 2019; Torenbeek & Peters, 2017).

The findings highlight the personal, social and environmental implications that surround teachers, exerting a clear influence on the generation of teachers' engagement and must be taken into account in the teaching-learning process. A multi-level approach can contribute to improving this process. It is therefore essential to develop training and intervention programmes adapted to the needs of teachers.

Strengths and Limitations

The use of focus groups brings remarkable strengths, since they have allowed us to analyze the differences in discourse between teachers of different educational stages, This is an area which needs to be deepened in order to be able to design teacher training programmes for specific groups. However, this study is not without limitations. A limitation is the circumscription of the sample to teachers of the stages of Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary Education. Although the study, due to its qualitative nature, focuses on providing evidence on the depth of the phenomenon, it would be interesting to note whether the correlates reported could be considered common among teachers of these stages in general, regardless of their specialization. Therefore, it would be advisable to include the perspectives of other teachers, comparable to each other, to arrive at shared meanings and a set of common categories that can contribute to the understanding of this construct. On the other hand, another limitation is that most of the participants are very experienced teachers, and relatively few had less than 5 years of experience in teaching, which can affect their perceptions. Therefore, for future research, it would be advisable to take this into account to make the focus groups more heterogeneous. In addition, the study could be planned by incorporating other important educational agents such as students and their families, as well as other education professionals involved in the teaching process-learning to check if the categories that arise are similar for other agents of education.

Conclusions

The results of this study indicate that there are several facilitators and barriers that promote and/or hinder the generation of work engagement in teachers, causing a number of consequences for teachers that may be positive or negative. On the one hand, motivation, satisfaction and social relations and a favorable environment facilitate teachers'work engagement. On the other hand, low scores in emotional intelligence and high levels of demotivation, stress and anxiety complicate the generation of work engagement in teachers and, consequently, the teachers involved in the work have positive consequences for their work such as satisfaction and motivation and negative consequences such as stress, fatigue and anxiety. Our findings emphasize the need for educational programmes, teacher education and intervention educational programnes in order to train teachers to deal with complex situations that arise in the world of work and to be able to engage more in the exercise of their professional work.

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Genişletilmiş Türkçe Özet

İşe katılım, işçilerin işyerinde başarı elde etmelerini sağlayan memnuniyet, motivasyon, ilgi ve pozitifliktir. Bununla birlikte, yüksek iş talepleri ve tükenme nedeniyle, öğretmenler liseye katılmak ve okulu bırakmakta zorluk çekebilirler. Bu nedenle, bu çalışma bu yapıyı bir başlangıç noktası olarak aldı, çünkü giderek artan işgücü talepleri nedeniyle yüksek düzeyde tükenme ve terk edilme gösteren öğretmenlerin yüzdesi daha yüksek, halk sağlığı sorunu olmak. Bu yüzdeye ve bu yapıyı anlamadaki bazı anlaşmazlıklara rağmen, öğretmenler işlerini yapmalarını engelleyen engellere müdahale ederlerse çalışmaya katılım geliştirebilirler, onlara kolaylaştırıcı unsurlar sağlamak. Bu çalışmanın amacı, öğretmenlerin eğitimin farklı aşamalarında çalışmaya katılım algılarını tanımlamak ve araştırmaktı (Erken Çocukluk, İlköğretim ve Ortaöğretim). Odak gruplarına dayanan nitel bir tanımlayıcı çalışma, doğalcı bir perspektiften, kahramanların deneyimlerinin keşfinden çok az bilinen bir fenomeni derinlemesine tanımlamak için tasarlanmıştır. Almería (İspanya) ilinden toplam 26 öğretmenle dört odak grubu gerçekleştirildi. Bununla birlikte, İspanyol öğretmenlere odaklanmasına rağmen, bu çalışma benzer sorunlarla karşılaşan diğer ülkeler için aktarılabilir mesajlar içermektedir. Numune seçimi kasıtlı bir örnekleme tekniği ile gerçekleştirilmiştir. Veriler, Ocak ve Şubat 2022 arasında, nitel araştırma konusunda eğitim almış araştırmacılar tarafından yönetilen dört odak grubu aracılığıyla toplanmıştır. Odak grupları öğretmenlerin çalıştığı eğitim merkezlerinde ve saat 1:30 civarında gerçekleşti. Tüm katılımcıların yanıtları sesli olarak kaydedildi ve kelimeye göre kopyalandı. Daha sonra katılımcılar içeriği doğrulamak için transkriptleri okuma fırsatı buldular. Odak grup yanıtları, nitel analiz yazılımı Atlas.ti sürüm 22 (Scientific Software Development GmbH, Berlin, Almanya) ile kopyalanmış ve analiz edilmiştir. Endüktif veri analizinden üç ana tema ve altı alt tema ortaya çıktı. Hepsi, tüm eğitim aşamalarında öğretmenlerin iş katılımı ile ilgili algılarını tanımlama ve keşfetme hedefine ulaşmayı mümkün kılmıştır: (1) Alt temalarla iş taahhütleri oluşturma nedenleri: kişisel kolaylaştırıcılar ve çevresel kolaylaştırıcılar; (2) Alt konularla iş taahhütleri oluşturmanın önündeki engeller: bireysel engeller ve çevresel engeller; (3) İş katılımının alt temalarla etkileri: olumlu sonuçlar ve olumsuz sonuçlar. Bu bulgular, (ödülleri ve hedef belirleme) ve çevrenin (çevre ile iyi ilişkiler, uygun çevre, sosyal tanıma) ve bireysel engeller (zayıf organizasyon ve zaman planlaması, düşük esneklik seviyeleri, duygusal zeka eksikliği) ve çevre (toksik ortamlar, zayıf sosyal ilişkiler, İspanyol öğretmenlerde bir iş taahhüdü oluşturulmasını teşvik eden ve / veya engelleyen ve bir dizi olumlu veya olumsuz sonuca yol açan algılanan sosyal baskı). Bununla birlikte, çalışmanın benzer sorunlarla karşılaşan diğer ülkeler için aktarılabilir sonuçlar sağladığı unutulmamalıdır. Sonuç olarak, bulgularımız, öğretmenleri iş dünyasında ortaya çıkan karmaşık durumlarla başa çıkmaları ve egzersize daha fazla katılmaları için eğitmek amacıyla eğitim ve müdahale eğitim programlarına duyulan ihtiyacı vurgulamaktadır iş profesyonellerinin.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İş katılımı, öğretmen eğitimi, odak grubu, nitel araştırma, öğretmenler.

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